Notebook 1 Redacted

REVEREND CLERGY, DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL, PUBLIC OFFICIALS, FAMILY, FRIENDS AND CITIZENS OF PEABODY.

I AM PRIVILEGED TO STAND BEFORE YOU TODAY, AS YOUR MAYOR, TO REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF OUR CITY AT THE MID-POINT OF MY CURRENT TERM IN OFFICE. MANY OF THE GOALS SET BY THIS ADMINISTRATION HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND SOME ARE WELL UNDERWAY AND WILL BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. THE YEAR AHEAD WILL ALSO SEE NEW GOALS ESTABLISHED AND ISSUES THAT ARE ON-GOING WILL BE ADDRESSED ON A CONTINUING BASIS.

MUCH OF WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS HAS BEEN DUE TO THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES OF OUR GOVERNMENT. I WANT TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK LAST YEAR'S CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT, TOM WALSH, FOR HIS HELP AND COOPERATION IN EFFECTIVELY MAINTAINING A SMOOTH AND ORDERLY WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BRANCHES OF OUR GOVERNMENT.

I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES TO JIM MOUTSOULAS, THE NEW COUNCIL PRESIDENT FOR 1987. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH JIM IN ADDRESSING THE MANY ISSUES WE WILL BE FACING OVER THE NEXT YEAR.

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THE HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: OUR BOARDS; COMMISSIONS; DEPARTMENT HEADS; STATE DELEGATION; AND, OUR RANK AND FILE EMPLOYEES. WITH THEIR HELP AND COMMITMENT WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN WORKING TOWARDS MAKING PEABODY A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE.

THIS PAST YEAR HAS SEEN THE LOSS OF A NUMBER OF KEY CITY PERSONNEL WHO PLAYED MAJOR ROLES IN ADMINISTERING THE AFFAIRS OF OUR CITY. I WANT TO THANK EACH OF THEM FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR COMMUNITY. I AM PLEASED THAT ON EACH OCCASION THEIR REASON FOR LEAVING WAS CAREER ADVANCEMENT.

I AM ALSO PLEASED THAT THEIR REPLACEMENTS ARE AS EQUALLY COMPETENT, AGRESSIVE, AND DEDICATED. AS TIME GOES ON I AM SURE THEY WILL MAKE THEIR PRESENCE KNOWN AND WILL MAKE THE TYPES OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR COMMUNITY THAT MADE THEIR PRECEDESSORS SUCCESSFUL.

I BELIEVE OUR HIRING PRACTICES AND OUR DESIRE FOR EXCELLENCE HAVE PROVIDED US WITH THE ABILITY TO MAKE THE TRANSITION WITHOUT SKIPPING A BEAT. I WANT TO THANK THE COUNCIL FOR SUPPORTING THE PROCESS LAID OUT BY THIS ADMINISTRATION THROUGH THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT.

IN PRIOR YEARS AND AT LAST YEAR'S INAUGURAL, WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT THE NEED FOR FINANCIAL STABILITY IN OUR COMMUNITY. I HAVE ALWAYS FELT STRONGLY THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT GOVERNMENT SPENDING OF THE TAXPAYERS' DOLLARS MUST BE PRUDENT AND RESPONSIBLE.

I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE HAVE REACHED THE GOAL OF FINANCIAL STABILITY AND TO STAY THERE WE MUST WORK TOGETHER. LET ME TOUCH ON SOME OF THE GOALS WE HAVE ATTAINED.

FIRST, WITH REGARD TO OUR PROPERTY TAXES, THERE WAS NO INCREASE THIS YEAR FOR OUR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OWNERS. THE RATE WAS THE SAME AS LAST YEAR, GIVING OUR CITIZENS RELIEF FROM ANY TAX INCREASE. I AM ALSO PLEASED TO REPORT FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW THAT WE DID NOT BORROW ANY FUNDS IN ANTICIPATION OF TAXES, SAVING THE TAXPAYERS HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS.

WE DID NOT HAVE ANY REVENUE DEFICIT AND OUR BONDED INDEBTEDNESS OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS HAS DROPPED BY FORTY (40) PERCENT. THE CITY NOW HAS FREE CASH TO DEAL WITH ANY UNFORSEEN EXPENDITURES AND HAS MADE A MAJOR COMMITMENT IN THE AREA OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS.

WE MUST CONTINUE ON THE PATH WE HAVE TAKEN TO ASSURE LONG TERM STABILITY OF OUR FINANCES AND AVOID THE DOOM AND GLOOM OF MUNICIPAL FINANCE THAT WE SO OFTEN HEAR.

IN REGARD TO CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS WE ARE COMPLETING OUR THIRD YEAR OF A FIVE YEAR PLAN WHICH PROTECTS THE MAJOR INVESTMENTS MADE BY OUR TAXPAYERS. THESE INCLUDE THE UPGRADING AND IMPROVING OF OUR BUILDINGS AND PURCHASING OF ADDITIONAL ROLLING STOCK.

THIS PAST YEAR ALONE, SCHOOL ROOFS AND MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS WERE REPAIRED, SIXTEEN UNITS OF ROLLING STOCK INCLUDING TRUCKS AND TRACTORS WERE PURCHASED, A NEW PISTOL RANGE WILL BE CONSTRUCTED FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF OTHER ITEMS WHICH WILL PROVIDE US WITH THE NECESSARY TOOLS TO DO A MORE EFFICIENT JOB.

OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS, INCLUDING OUR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, 4.7 MILLION DOLLARS HAS BEEN SPENT AND I AM PLEASED TO REPORT TO YOU NOT A DIME OF IT HAS BEEN BORROWED. THIS HAS SAVED OUR CITIZENS THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN INTEREST CHARGES.

IT IS MY GOAL FOR 1987 TO CONTINUE WITH OUR FOURTH YEAR OF THE PROGRAM AND TO COMMIT ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS.

IN 1986 WE CONTINUED THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF OUR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROGRAM. A WALK OR A DRIVE DOWN MAIN STREET WITH ITS NEW STOREFRONTS AND SIGNAGE WILL REVEAL THE TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF THE GROWING PRIDE IN OUR CITY.

WE HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED WORD ON OUR SMALL CITIES GRANT APPLICATION; WE WILL BE FUNDED IN 1987 TO THE TUNE OF $700,000 WHICH WILL ALSO BE LEVERAGED WITH PRIVATE MONEY. THE MAIN FOCUS WILL BE THE WALNUT STREET AREA AND THE PROGRAM WILL PROVIDE FACADE GRANTS, SIGN GRANTS, SMALL BUSINESS LOANS AND HOUSING REHABILITATION LOANS ALONG WITH ROAD AND TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS. I BELIEVE IN 1987 THE WALNUT STREET AREA WILL BE UPGRADED IN THE SAME FASHION AS WAS MAIN STREET.

WHEN WE ADD TO THE REVITALIZATION PROGRAM THE URBAN SYSTEMS PROGRAM, WHICH IS NOW COMPLETE ON WASHINGTON STREET, IS NEARING COMPLETION ON WALNUT STREET AND WILL BE BEGINNING ON MAIN STREET THIS YEAR, WE WILL SEE A DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN THE ENTIRE DOWNTOWN AREA. THIS WILL PROVIDE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR THOSE WHO WORK, SHOP AND LIVE IN DOWNTOWN PEABODY.

THIS IS ALSO THE FIFTH YEAR OF OUR SMALL CITIES PROGRAM AND I WANT TO CONGRATULATE THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. THROUGH THEIR EFFORTS, 4.6 MILLION DOLLARS OF STATE AND FEDERAL MONEY HAS BEEN CHANNELED INTO THE CITY OF PEABODY. ADD TO THAT THE MILLIONS IN PRIVATE INVESTMENT ALONG WITH THE URBAN SYSTEMS PROGRAM WHICH IS ANOTHER 5 MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT, AS WELL AS THE MANY HOUSING PROGRAMS AND I BELIEVE THAT THESE RESULTS ADD UP TO A GREAT SUCCESS STORY.

MUCH HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED BUT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE IN 1987. WE WILL BE PURSUING VARIOUS AVAILABLE GRANT PROGRAMS TO UPGRADE THE FOSTER STREET AREA. OUR CITY DOES NOT HAVE AND WILL NOT HAVE ANY AREAS THAT WE ARE ASHAMED OF AS WE WISH TO ALLOW OUR CITIZENS TO LIVE AND RAISE THEIR FAMILIES IN THE BEST POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENT.

IN 1986 OUR LAST AVAILABLE PARCEL OF LAND IN THE CENTENNIAL INDUSTRIAL PARK WAS SOLD. ALTHOUGH CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES ALONG WITH A MAJOR LUXURY HOTEL WILL CONTINUE, THE CITY'S ROLE OF DEVELOPER IS OVER.

CENTENNIAL HAS RENEWED OUR INDUSTRIAL BASE, REPLACING THE DEVASTATED LEATHER INDUSTRY. I BELIEVE THE PARK HAS SURPASSED ALL EXPECTATIONS IN TERMS OF JOBS AND TAX BASE, NOT TO MENTION THE 16 MILLION DOLLARS IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT ACTION GRANTS THE CITY HAS RECEIVED.

THESE RESOURCES WILL BE USED TO PLAN AND DEVELOP THE CITY'S FUTURE.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THIS SUCCESS AND IT IS NOTEWORTHY TO POINT OUT THAT BETWEEN THE UDAG GRANT PROGRAM, THE SMALL CITIES PROGRAM AND THE URBAN SYSTEMS, NOT TO MENTION OTHERS, THE CITY HAS BEEN THE RECIPIENT OF SOME 27 MILLION DOLLARS IN STATE AND FEDERAL GRANTS, WHICH HAS BEEN THE MAJOR FACTOR OF OUR RESURGENCE AND VITALITY AS A COMMUNITY. IN 1987 WE WILL CONTINUE TO AGGRESSIVELY PURSUE ALL FUNDING PROGRAMS THAT WILL ASSIST IN PROVIDING US WITH THE NECESSARY RESOURCES TO MAINTAIN THIS MOMENTUM.

IN 1986 WE STARTED IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN. AT THAT TIME $400,000 WAS COMMITTED TO THE PROGRAM. I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BUYING OUR SECOND PARCEL OF LAND

ALSO THIS YEAR, ONE OF OUR COMMUNITY BUSINESSES HAS AGREED TO DONATE TO THE CITY ANOTHER TRACT OF 22 ACRES. OUR EFFORTS TO ACQUIRE VARIOUS PARCELS THAT ARE NOW IN TAX TITLE, AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL ACQUISITIONS, WILL ENABLE US TO INCREASE OUR INVENTORY AND PROVIDE VALUABLE OPEN SPACE FOR OUR CITIZENS.

MAJOR PARK IMPROVEMENTS ARE NOW UNDERWAY AT SYMPHONY, CORBEIL, KENNEDY, MARRS, EMERSON AND THE HIGH SCHOOL. EVERY EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO COMPLETE THESE PROJECTS BY THE SPRING OR EARLY SUMMER SO OUR CITIZENS CAN FULLY UTILIZE THEM.

LAST YEAR WAS THE START OF THIS MASTER PLAN; THOUGH MUCH WAS ACCOMPLISHED, MUCH NOW REMAINS TO BE DONE.

BECAUSE OF MY FIRM BELIEF IN THE NEED FOR THIS PROGRAM WHICH IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF A WELL BALANCED COMMUNITY, I WILL BE SUBMITTING TO THE CITY COUNCIL IN THE NEAR FUTURE A REQUEST FOR AN APPROPRIATION OF $500,000 FOR YEAR TWO OF THE OPEN SPACE-RECREATION PROGRAM. WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO LEVERAGE THE $500,000 WITH VARIOUS STATE AND FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS TO ALLOW US TO DO EVEN MORE IN OUR EFFORTS TO PROVIDE OUR CITIZENS WITH QUALITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

IN MY INAUGURAL ADDRESS LAST YEAR, I INDICATED THAT I WOULD SUBMIT AN APPROPRIATION REQUEST TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE FUNDING OF A MAJOR TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT FOR OUR CITY THAT WOULD IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS AND TRAFFIC CONTROLS TO COMPLEMENT THE ROUTE 128 WORK, AND THE URBAN SYSTEMS PROJECT. I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT 3 WEEKS AGO THE CITY RECEIVED THE FINAL PLANS FOR OUR TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

THIS $50,000 STUDY WILL ALLOW US TO ADDRESS, IN A MORE COMPREHENSIVE WAY, OUR NEEDS FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS. BESIDES A STRONG ECONOMY, THE MAJOR ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY ON ROUTES 128, 114 AND THE URBAN SYSTEMS PROGRAM HAVE COMPOUNDED OUR TRAFFIC PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THE COMPLETION OF THESE PROJECTS ALONG WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR RECENTLY COMPLETED TRAFFIC STUDY WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARD PROVIDING RELIEF TO OUR MOTORISTS. OUR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT IS NOW REVIEWING THE PLANS AND PREPARING TO MEET WITH THE CITY COUNCIL AND PROVIDE THEIR HONORABLE BODY WITH A DETAILED BRIEFING. THE PLANS IDENTIFY BOTH SHORT AND LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS, ALONG WITH THOSE PROJECTS THAT WOULD QUALIFY FOR OUTSIDE FUNDING. INCLUDED IN THE PLANS ARE A NUMBER OF SMALL PROJECTS REQUIRING LOCAL FUNDING THAT WILL BE STARTED THIS YEAR AND CONTINUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PLANS OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS. THESE WILL ADDRESS PROBLEM AREAS AND PROVIDE RELIEF.

I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO START THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE PROGRAMS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THEREFORE, I WILL BE SUBMITTING TO THE CITY COUNCIL, IN THE NEAR FUTURE, AN APPROPRIATION REQUEST OF $500,000 ALONG WITH RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AS PHASE I OF OUR MASTER PLAN FOR TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS.

A SIMILAR PLAN IS BEING DEVELOPED FOR THE CITY OF SALEM BY THE SAME TRAFFIC ENGINEERS. HOPEFULLY WE CAN COORDINATE THOSE AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST AND PROVIDE A SMOOTHER MOVEMENT FROM ONE CITY TO THE OTHER.

THIS PAST YEAR UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF JOHN SEITES, THE PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ADDRESSING A NUMBER OF COMMUNITY NEEDS IN THE AREA OF WATER AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS.

$600,000 WAS SPENT IN RECONSTRUCTING AND RESURFACING ROADWAYS TO PROVIDE FOR A MORE EFFICIENT OPERATION. THIS PAST YEAR HAS ALSO SEEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPUTERIZED WORK CONTROL PROCEDURES AND COMPUTERIZED WORK ORDERS ON STREET CONDITIONS AND REPAIR NEEDS. THIS WILL ASSIST US IN MORE EFFICIENTLY DEALING WITH THE MORE THAN 4,000 INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS FOR SERVICES RECEIVED ANNUALLY. AGAIN, THIS PAST YEAR, ADDITIONAL NEW EQUIPMENT AND ROLLING STOCK WAS PURCHASED TO PROVIDE OUR PERSONNEL WITH THE NECESSARY TOOLS TO DO THEIR JOBS MORE EFFICIENTLY.

IN 1987 WE WILL ENDEAVOR TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF SERVICES WE DELIVER TO OUR CITIZENS. WE WILL START OUR ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM THIS SPRING AND WE WILL BE COMMITTING BETWEEN SMALL CITIES AND CHAPTER 90 GRANT FUNDS AND CITY FUNDS SOME $600,000 TO THIS PROGRAM. WE HAVE MADE GREAT STRIDES IN THIS PROGRAM OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS AND WE WILL CONTINUE UNTIL EVERY ROADWAY IN OUR CITY IS FREE OF IMPEDIMENTS TO SAFE DRIVING.

THIS PAST YEAR THERE WERE ALSO MANY SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS BUT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE. I WILL BE INSTRUCTING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICES TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE SIDEWALK PROGRAM ACROSS THE CITY AND I WILL BE REQUESTING AN APPROPRIATION FROM THE CITY COUNCIL FOR $250,000 TO START PHASE I OF THIS PROGRAM. BOTH THE ROAD AND SIDEWALK PROGRAMS WILL PROVIDE FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY AND ALSO ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE OF OUR ROADWAYS.

IN LAST YEAR'S INAUGURAL WE DISCUSSED THE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE AREA OF PUBLIC SAFETY. I AM PLEASED TO REPORT TO YOU THIS MORNING THAT OUR NEW ROLLING STOCK IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN DELIVERED, THE NEW STATE OF THE ART COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM HAS BEEN INSTALLED AND IS WORKING WELL, AND OUR NEW PROSPECT STREET FIRE STATION IS NEAR COMPLETION. ALSO, IN 1987, THE REHABILITATION OF THE CENTRAL FIRE STATION WILL BEGIN.

THIS PROGRAM, WHEN COMPLETED AT A COST IN EXCESS OF TWO MILLION DOLLARS, WILL PROVIDE US WITH ONE OF THE BEST EQUIPPED COMMUNITIES IN THE AREA FOR SEVERAL YEARS TO COME.

I AM PLEASED TO REPORT TO YOU THIS MORNING THAT WE HAVE JUST ABOUT REACHED OUR GOAL IN RESTORING OUR MANPOWER LEVEL IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO ORDINANCE STRENGTH AND WE WILL BE INVESTIGATING THE POSSIBILITY OF DOING EVEN BETTER. 1987 WILL SEE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW PISTOL RANGE AT OUR POLICE STATION ALONG WITH PROVIDING THE ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT TO KEEP OUR DEPARTMENT CURRENT WITH MODERN CRIME FIGHTING TECHNIQUES. THIS IS THE FIRST COMPLETE YEAR UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF CHIEF JOSEPH DONLON AND I WANT TO PUBLICLY CONGRATULATE HIM FOR A JOB WELL DONE.

THIS PAST YEAR HAS SEEN MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN EDUCATION. OUR REORGANIZATION INTO A MIDDLE SCHOOL CONCEPT AND FOUR YEAR HIGH SCHOOL HAS BEEN SMOOTHLY IMPLEMENTED. CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER TO THE ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL FOR PROVIDING A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO THE NEW GRADE STRUCTURE.

THIS PAST YEAR HAS SEEN MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS, ALONG WITH NEW ROLLING STOCK AND EDUCATIONAL EQUIPMENT. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF ADDING ATHLETIC FACILITIES TO ACCOMODATE THE ADDITIONAL GRADE LEVEL AT THE HIGH SCHOOL. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH BOTH THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL IN 1987 TO EXPAND ON WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND TO ASSURE OUR STUDENTS THEY WILL RECEIVE THE BEST EDUCATION POSSIBLE IN PREPARING THEMSELVES FOR THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE.

1986 WAS A SUCCESSFUL YEAR WITH REGARD TO COMMUNITY PROGRAMS SUCH AS THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL, THE PRIDE IN PEABODY PROGRAM, THE EDUCATION COUNCIL AND THE HOLIDAY FESTIVAL. THESE PROGRAMS WERE SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE OF THE DEDICATION AND HARD WORK OF THE MANY VOLUNTEERS WHO CARE ABOUT OUR CITY.

THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL PROMOTES OUR HERITAGE AND BRINGS TOGETHER THE DIVERSE ETHNICITIES REPRESENTED IN OUR COMMUNITY. THE PRIDE IN PEABODY AND ADOPT-AN-ISLAND PROGRAMS DEMONSTRATE CIVIC COMMITTMENT AND PRIDE. THE EDUCATION COUNCIL DEMONSTRATES BUSINESS COMMITTMENT TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND CONCERN FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE, AND THE HOLIDAY FESTIVAL PROMOTES THE JOY OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

1987 WILL SEE GREATLY EXPANDED COMMUNITY PROGRAMS. THE NEW PRIDE IN PEABODY PROGRAM, WHICH WILL BE RELEASED THIS WEEK, WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED WITH INNOVATIVE NEW PROGRAMS WHICH I BELIEVE WILL GENERATE ADDITONAL ENTHUSIASM AND INVOLVEMENT. THE EDUCATION COUNCIL WILL BE DEVELOPING BIGGER AND BETTER PROGRAMS FOR 1987 AND THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL WILL BE AS EXCITING AS THE PREVIOUS THREE YEARS. I WANT TO THANK THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN SO UNSELFISHLY OF THEIR TIME AND EFFORT TO MAKE THESE PROGRAMS SUCCESSFUL AND ULTIMATELY HAVE MADE OUR COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE.

THIS PAST YEAR HAS SEEN THE MOBILE PARK ISSUE GO FROM INTENSE TURMOIL TO RELATIVE TRANQUILITY. THOUGH THERE IS STILL MORE TO BE DONE TO RESOLVE SOME OF THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES, THE PROGRESS TO DATE HAS BEEN MADE THROUGH MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE. I BELIEVE WE MUST CONTINUE ON THIS PATH BECAUSE CONFRONTATION WILL NOT PROVIDE SOLUTIONS.

WE HAVE OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS BEEN WORKING TO RESOLVE TWO MAJOR LAW SUITS AGAINST THE CITY WHICH DATE BACK TEN YEARS, INVOLVING THE NORTH SHORE SHOPPING CENTER AND THE SALEM COUNTRY CLUB. I BELIEVE 1987 WILL SEE THE RESOLUTION OF THESE TWO LONG STANDING SUITS AGAINST THE CITY AND RELIEVE US OF A BURDEN WE HAVE BEEN FACED WITH FOR YEARS. I WANT TO CONGRATULATE LARRY O'KEEFE AND THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT ON THEIR HARD WORK ON THESE TWO CASES AS WELL AS OTHER LEGAL MATTERS INVOLVING THE CITY.

IN LAST YEAR'S INAUGURAL I POINTED OUT THE NEED TO OPEN THE LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES. I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT THIS HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE FORMATION OF THE NORTH SHORE EXECUTIVES COUNCIL WHICH MEETS MONTHLY TO EXCHANGE IDEAS AND ADDRESS ISSUES OF COMMON INTEREST TO ALLOW US NOT ONLY TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY BETTER, BUT ALSO THE REGION AS A WHOLE.

LAST YEAR AND OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS MUCH HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED BUT MUCH STILL REMAINS TO BE DONE. I FIRMLY BELIEVE WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO PROPEL OUR CITY INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY WITH A SENSE OF PRIDE, A FEELING OF PROSPERITY AND A QUALITY OF LIFE UNPARALLELED IN PEABODY'S HISTORY.

I STAND BEFORE YOU TODAY WITH A DEEP SENSE OF PRIDE IN LOOKING AT WHERE OUR CITY WAS AND WHERE WE ARE TODAY. A GOOD EXAMPLE OF WHERE WE ARE IS THE STABILIZATION OF THE TAX RATE THIS YEAR. A MASTER PLAN FOR OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION IS BEING IMPLEMENTED, OUR FIVE YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN IS NOW ENTERING ITS 4TH YEAR, A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY FOR TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS HAS BEEN COMPLETED, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAS CREATED A BROADER TAX BASE AS WELL AS JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CITIZENS.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA IS SHOWING MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS THROUGH OUR REVITALIZATION PROGRAM AND MORE WILL BE DONE. OUR 5 MILLION DOLLAR URBAN SYSTEMS PROGRAM IS WELL UNDERWAY WHICH WILL GIVE OUR DOWNTOWN MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN TRAFFIC AND APPEARANCE. OUR COMMUNITY APPEARANCE IS IMPROVING THROUGH THE PRIDE IN PEABODY PROGRAM AND THE ADOPT-AN-ISLAND PROGRAM. ETHNIC PRIDE AND COMMUNITY PRIDE IS INCREASING AS EVIDENCED BY THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL AND HOLIDAY FESTIVAL AND THE LIST GOES ON. HOWEVER, MORE IMPORTANTLY OUR IMAGE AS A CITY AND HOW WE ARE VIEWED BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE CITY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A TOP PRIORITY OF MINE AND I BELIEVE WE HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN THAT AREA.

THIS MORNING YOU HEARD ME TALK ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY'S PROGRESS, ABOUT IMPROVEMENTS AND GOALS, EVERYTHING FROM FINANCES TO OPEN SPACE, FROM TRAFFIC TO CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS.

IF SOMEONE WERE TO ASK ME IF THERE WAS ONE THING THAT I WOULD WANT TO ACCOMPLISH MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE AND BE REMEMBERED FOR IT IN YEARS TO COME, IT WOULD NOT BE THE INDUSTRIAL PARK, REVITALIZATION OR FINANCES, BUT RATHER THAT THIS ADMINISTRATION CARED ABOUT THE PEOPLE IN THIS COMMUNITY, AND HAD WON THEIR TRUST AND CONFIDENCE; THAT WE WERE RESPONSIVE TO THEIR NEEDS AND GENUINELY WANTED TO MAKE PEABODY THE BEST PLACE TO LIVE. I REALLY DO NOT KNOW OF ANY WAY TO GAUGE THIS GOAL, BUT LET ME ASSURE YOU THAT I WILL EXPEND EVERY OUNCE OF ENERGY TO MAKE THAT GOAL OR DREAM A REALITY, AND MAKE OUR CITY A MUCH BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU.